



CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC CONTROL

TOOLBOX TALK SERIES – ROADSIDE CONSTRUCTION

August 2025

Video Link: [Construction Traffic Control: Top 7 Steps of Traffic Control](#)

After the video, we'll discuss how this applies specifically to your roles in the Town of Perinton.

Objective

To provide employees with the knowledge and awareness to safely perform work in or near roadways, and to effectively implement traffic control procedures that protect workers, motorists, and pedestrians.

THE HAZARDS OF ROADSIDE WORK

Working near traffic presents multiple hazards:

- **Being struck by moving vehicles** – including both public traffic and work vehicles.
- **Inadequate visibility** – due to weather, lighting, curves, or distractions.
- **Inconsistent driver behavior** – distracted, aggressive, or impaired drivers.
- **Slips, trips, and falls** – caused by debris, uneven ground, or poor lighting.
- **Equipment-related hazards** – such as blind spots and backup incidents.

According to OSHA, struck-by incidents are one of the **“Fatal Four”** causes of death in construction.

1. PRE-JOB PLANNING

Planning is key to safety. Before starting any roadside work:

- **Assess the jobsite:** Identify traffic volume, speed limits, visibility, shoulder space, and access points.
- **Determine work zone needs:** Will the lane need closure? Flaggers? Detours?



- **Assign roles:** Ensure responsibilities are clear—flaggers, spotters, supervisors, and equipment operators.
- **Review the traffic control plan:** Follow MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) standards or state DOT guidelines.
- **Hold a pre-shift tailgate meeting:** Go over the day's tasks, traffic control setup, and emergency procedures.

Remember: No one should begin work until all control devices and personnel are in place.

2. SETTING UP A SAFE WORK ZONE

The structure of a proper work zone includes:

A. Advance Warning Area

Warns drivers of upcoming road work with signs like:

- "ROAD WORK AHEAD"
- "BE PREPARED TO STOP"
- "FLAGGER AHEAD"

B. Transition Area

This is where traffic is redirected or merged. Includes:

- **Tapered cones/barrels**
- Arrow boards to shift lanes safely

C. Activity Area

Where work is performed. Includes:

- Work vehicles
- Crew members
- Buffer zones for extra protection

D. Termination Area

Where traffic is directed back to normal flow. Signs include:

- "END ROAD WORK"



Key Equipment Used:

- Signs (reflective and appropriately sized)
- Cones and barrels (MUTCD compliant)
- Arrow boards and message signs
- Barricades
- Temporary traffic signals or flagging

All devices should be:

- **Placed based on roadway speed** (more distance for higher speeds)
 - **Checked for visibility** (day and night)
 - **Inspected daily**
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3. FLAGGER SAFETY

Flaggers are the **first line of defense** between oncoming traffic and your crew.

Requirements:

- **Training:** Flaggers must be trained and certified.
- **Clothing:** ANSI Class 3 high-vis apparel (vests, long sleeves, rain gear), hard hats.
- **Paddle signs:** "STOP/SLOW" signs must be 18–24" wide with reflective sheeting.

Safe Flagger Practices:

- **Stand in a visible, safe location**—not in traffic lanes.
 - **Face traffic** and maintain eye contact with drivers.
 - **Avoid distractions**—no phones, no side conversations.
 - Use **clear and deliberate signals** with arm motions and signs.
 - **Have a radio** or reliable method to communicate with other flaggers or crew leads.
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4. CREW BEHAVIOR NEAR TRAFFIC

Even with a proper setup, employee behavior is critical:

- **Stay inside barricaded or designated work zones** whenever possible.
- **Face oncoming traffic** when outside vehicles.
- Never turn your back to live lanes.
- **Use spotters** when backing or operating equipment near personnel or traffic.



- Be alert to **changing traffic conditions** or reckless drivers.
 - **Wear PPE at all times**, including:
 - ANSI high-visibility vests (Class 2 or 3 depending on speed zone)
 - Hard hats
 - Safety-toe boots
 - Gloves and eye protection
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5. LOW-LIGHT AND NIGHT WORK

Working in the dark increases risk significantly.

- Ensure **sufficient lighting** in work and transition areas without blinding drivers.
- Use **retroreflective gear** and check all signage and barricades are illuminated or reflective.
- Vehicles and equipment must have:
 - Flashing strobes
 - Working headlights, taillights, brake lights
 - Reflective tape as needed

Pro Tip: Use balloon lights or towers that emit **soft, non-glare lighting** to improve visibility for both workers and drivers.

6. DAILY INSPECTIONS & MAINTENANCE

Each day before work begins:

- Walk the work zone and **inspect all devices** for damage, fading, or misplacement.
 - Confirm all **vehicles and equipment** have functioning:
 - Lights
 - Backup alarms
 - Brakes
 - Mirrors and cameras
 - **Check your PPE** for tears, loss of reflectivity, or wear.
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7. INCIDENT RESPONSE & COMMUNICATION

If an incident occurs:



1. **Ensure safety** of all personnel first.
2. **Call emergency services** if needed.
3. **Notify supervisor** immediately.
4. **Document the scene** with photos and witness accounts.
5. **Secure the area** to prevent further accidents.
6. Review and **revise the work zone setup** if needed.

Maintain **clear radio or phone communication** at all times—especially between flaggers and equipment operators.

SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR ROADWAY WORK

Do

Wear Class 2 or 3 high-vis gear
Face traffic while outside equipment
Use flaggers and signs properly
Check signage daily
Communicate with your team

Don't

Stand in active traffic lanes
Assume drivers are paying attention
Rush setup or teardown
Leave tools or debris near lane edges
Turn your back to moving vehicles

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (Ask the Crew)

1. **What's the most dangerous situation you've faced in a roadside work zone?**
2. **Have you ever had to correct an unsafe traffic control setup?**
3. **Where are our flagging and traffic control equipment stored?**
4. **What would you do if a driver enters your work zone aggressively?**

